

MTN Bushfire - Swaziland's music and arts festival

MTN Bushfire is Swaziland's three day music and arts festival from 30 May to 1 June, 2014, which celebrates creative expression whilst promoting social responsibility, stimulating the economy, and drawing talent and tourists from across Africa and around the world. More than simply a music festival, it's a creative space where expression, learning, sharing and inspiration take hold.



To that end, The Barn was conceptualised as a space in which a range of artistic expression could be showcased with an emphasis on dialogue, creativity and inspiration. MTN Bushfire believes passionately in the power of art, not just to entertain, but to provoke, to enlighten, to activate.

Through The Barn, MTN Bushfire hopes to facilitate conversation and encourage participants to be inspired thinkers, doers, artists and visionaries. Previous honoured guests have included actor and director, Richard E. Grant, indigenous knowledge advocate Joy Ndwandwe, restaurateur and indigenous food enthusiast Dolores Goddefory, humanitarian and explorer Kingsley Holgate, author and anti-apartheid sympathiser Elias Masilela, and specialist in low-cost renewable energy technologies Dr Sam Duby.

As part of The Barn programme for 2014, MTN Bushfire will host a contemporary art exhibition entitled "Swaziland Now!", which will have a group of local and international visual artists bringing their fire and exploring the issues of contemporary Swaziland.

Along with the exhibition, there will be a series of musical, dramatic, poetic performances and hosted panel discussions.

The Barn 2014 contributors are:

- Yebo Gallery: Yebo is a very active contributor to the Swazi contemporary art scene. They have curated a large number of local exhibitions, conduct art classes and have a not-for-profit organisation called Artreach, which deals with public art;
- Swaziland Now!: This group exhibition features contemporary Swazi art focusing on the current situation in Swaziland;
- Tonik: Tonik's "silent gig" concept has become a regular fixture at the festival, but new attendants are constantly surprised to find a room full of people bumping their heads to what appears to be complete silence;
- Tonik and Friends: As a way to foster collaborations and diversify performances, Tonik collaborates with other artists to bring a more profound performance to audience members;
- Global Shapers: The Mbabane Hub of the Global Shapers is moving from strength to strength. Made up of youths (younger than 33), the Hub is involved with projects that aim to make positive change in our community. Khuluma, meaning talk, is one of their projects. It is a series of open-forum panel discussions that engage with societal issues facing youths and indeed the broader nation;

- **Zambezi News:** Zambezi News is the breakthrough comedy series that has had audiences across the world in stitches. Irreverent, sarcastic and downright hilarious this is the news as you've always wanted it to be presented. A parody of a typical Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation news programme, Zambezi News satirises the relentless propaganda and astounding journalistic ineptitude on state TV. The Zimbabwe-made show features the comical news presenters Mandape Mandape (Tongai Leslie Makawa, aka Outspoken), Jerome Weathers (Samm Farai Monro, aka Comrade Fatso) and Kudzaishe Mushayahembe (Michael Kudakwashe); and
- **Guba:** Guba, meaning "to dig" in SiSwati, was founded in May 2009 in an effort to make a positive contribution to the AIDS pandemic devastating Swaziland by alleviating poverty through training in sustainable agriculture, natural building and natural resource management.

Online tickets are available at www.bushfire.co.sz. Go to www.facebook.com/MTNBUSHFIRE for daily updates. You can also follow on Twitter: [@bushfirefest](https://twitter.com/bushfirefest) #BRINGYOURFIRE

For more information: www.bushfire.co.sz

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